

## **THE CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A jewelry article comprising an annular body made of a hard material comprising tungsten carbide, wherein the annular body has at least one external facet that is  
5 ground to a predetermined shape with the hard material is long wearing and virtually indestructible during normal use of the jewelry article.

2. The jewelry article of claim 1 in the form of a finger ring, wherein the annular body has an axis of symmetry and inner and outer circumferences and includes:  
10 a first frusto-conically shaped facet extending around the outer circumference of said body, and forming a first outer facet of said body proximate a first axial extremity thereof;

a second frusto-conically shaped facet extending around the outer circumference of said body, and forming a second outer facet of said body proximate a  
15 second axial extremity thereof opposite said first axial extremity, and

a cylindrically shaped exterior portion forming a third facet extending around the outer circumference of said body and being disposed between said first and second facets.

20 3. The jewelry article of claim 2, wherein said first and second facets having surface angles within the range of from 1 to 40 degrees relative to the axis of symmetry of the body and are ground and polished to a mirror finish.

4. The jewelry article of claim 2, wherein the third facet is ground and  
25 polished to a mirror finish.

5. The jewelry article of claim 2, which further comprises a fourth frusto-conically shaped facet extending around the inner circumference of the body, and forming a first inner facet of said body proximate the first axial extremity, and a fifth frusto-conically  
30 shaped facet extending around the inner circumference of the body, and forming a second inner facet of said body proximate the second axial extremity.

6. The jewelry article of claim 5, wherein the fourth and fifth facets having surface angles within the range of from 1 to 40 degrees relative to the axis of symmetry of the body and are ground and polished to a mirror finish.

5                   7. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the hard material comprises a sintered tungsten carbide containing at least 85 weight% tungsten carbide.

8. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the at least one external facet is highly polished to a mirror-type luster that is maintained for life of the article and does not  
10                   require re- polishing during use.

9. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the at least one external facet comprises at least one or more finishes to provide unique reflection characteristics to the article.  
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10. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the body includes a cavity of a predetermined size and shape that is configured to receive an insert of a decoration component that provides a substantially different visual effect to the article.

20                   11. The jewelry article of claim 10, wherein the cavity is a slot, groove, notch, or hole in a preselected location in the annular body.

12. The jewelry article of claim 10, wherein the cavity is a continuous groove or slot which extends entirely around the annular body.  
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13. The jewelry article of claim 12, wherein the decoration component comprises a precious metal that is disposed in the slot, which extends entirely through the hard material, and the decoration component is mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the components of the jewelry article together.  
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14. The jewelry article of claim 10, further comprising an insert of a visually different hard material, a precious metal or a gemstone.

15. The jewelry article of claim 14, wherein the insert is pre-shaped to have a mating configuration with that of the cavity, and is retained in the cavity by a mechanical fit or with a glue.

5                   16. The jewelry article of claim 1, in the form of a ring, earring, or bracelet wherein the annular body has a generally circular configuration.

17. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the annular body includes design details that are maintained in their original configuration indefinitely.

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18. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the hard material consists essentially of sintered tungsten carbide.

19. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the hard material consists  
15 essentially of at least sintered tungsten carbide and a binding material.

20. The jewelry article of claim 19, wherein the binding material includes nickel or cobalt, or a combination thereof.

20                   21. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the hard material has a density of at least 13.3 g/cm<sup>3</sup>.

22. The jewelry article of claim 1, wherein the facet is curved.

25                   23. A jewelry article comprising an annular body made of a hard material comprising at least 85 weight% sintered tungsten carbide, wherein the annular body has at least one external face that is ground to a predetermined shape with the hard material being long wearing and virtually indestructible during normal use of the jewelry article.

30                   24. The jewelry article of claim 23, further comprising a binder present in an amount of 3 weight% to 13 weight%.

25. A jewelry article comprising an annular body made of a hard material having a density of at least  $13.3 \text{ g/cm}^3$  and comprising tungsten carbide, wherein the annular body has at least one external face that is ground to a predetermined shape with the hard material being long wearing and virtually indestructible during normal use of the jewelry article.